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NEW BRUNSWICK FIGHTS FOREST PESTS

Recent aerial spraying of about a million acres of forest against the spruce budworm increased to ten million acres the net area sprayed since the beginning of the operation in 1952.

Considerable portions of this acreage have been resprayed twice or more, at intervals of two or three years, to prevent a resurgence of budworm populations.

This year's expenditures, estimated at \$750,000, will place the total cost of ten yearly spray operations at more than \$15 million.

The aerial attacks on the budworm using a DDT solution are credited by forestry officials with saving the predominantly balsam-fir forests of northern New Brunswick from wide-spread devastation. They constitute the most extensive forest-insect control operation ever carried out in Canada, and one of the largest in North America.

SHARING THE COSTS

The actual spraying is carried out by Forest Protection Limited, a provincial Crown corporation consisting of the New Brunswick government and four pulp-and-paper companies in the province. Total spraying costs, including the construction of airfields, of which 15 have been built for forest spraying since 1952, are split three ways. The federal Department of Forestry and the New Brunswick government contribute a third each, and the companies make up the balance of the costs.

Federal assistance in this programme started in 1952, and initially comprised technical aid in the field of forest biology and, in addition financial aid starting in 1953.

Officials of the Forest Entomology and Pathology Branch of the Department of Forestry point to improvements in spraying techniques developed during the last ten years. Close co-operation with the Fisheries Research Board and the Department of Fisheries resulted in the use of smaller dosages of DDT, which give effective control of the budworm while reducing the hazard to fish in streams and lakes.

In 1961 and again this year, the spray was applied in New Brunswick at 1/4 lb. a half-gallon of solvent an acre, half the dosage of DDT used in previous spraying. Improvements in the timing of spray applications have at the same time resulted in maximum kill of the budworm.

BUDWORM STUDIES

Investigations of present spruce-budworm infestations in New Brunswick date from 1945. Population surveys of the insect were then started by the Forest Entomology and Pathology Laboratory located at Fredericton. To provide the biological information on which the spraying operations are based, the Fredericton laboratory has also drawn on background knowledge of spruce budworm resulting from investigations in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario.

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